

*About Cancer
For Native
Americans and
Alaska Natives*

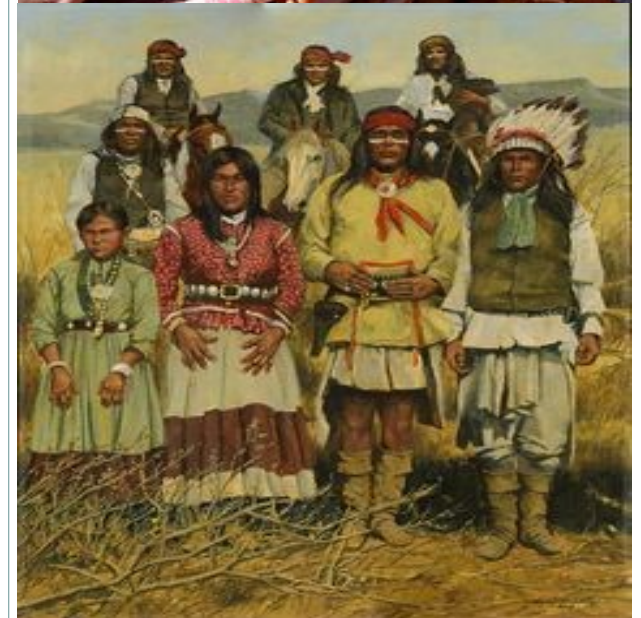
Cancer is the name
for diseases that
happen when cells—the
normal small units
that make up the
human body—start to
grow too fast in an
unhealthy way

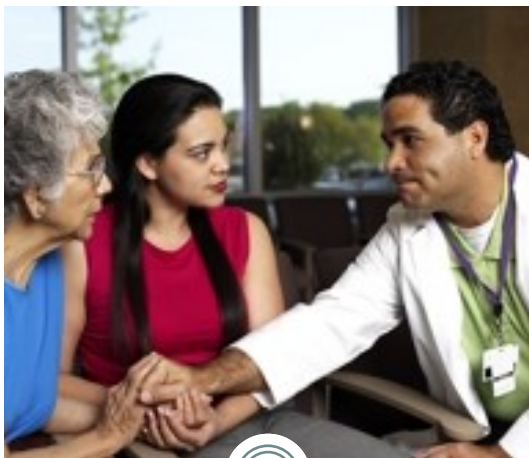
Is cancer serious?

Most cancers that are
serious can be treated,
and some can be cured.
Cancer affects different
people in different ways



**Health Disparities in
Cancer Among Native
Americans & Alaska**





Frequent Asked Questions About Cancer for Native American and Alaska

Will I Get Cancer?

Cancer is the second leading cause of death among Native Americans and Alaska Natives. Anyone can get cancer, but some people have a higher risk. We can control some risks. For example, we know that smoking causes many kinds of cancer, and quitting smoking can lower your risk of getting these cancers. Other risks we can't control, like getting older or having a family history of cancer.

Native Americans and Alaska Natives get most kinds of cancer at lower rates than white people. But rates of stomach, liver, cervix, kidney, and gallbladder cancers are higher among these groups.

HOW CAN I LOWER MY RISK?

THINGS YOU CAN DO

- Be active and exercise, and keep a healthy body weight.
- Learn about hepatitis B and HPV shots, which can prevent cancer.
- Talk to your doctor about getting screened for breast, cervical, and colon cancers. Protect yourself from the sun when you're outdoors

Things You Can Avoid

- Don't smoke, and avoid smoke from other people's cigarettes. Don't drink too much alcohol.

What CDC Is Doing About Health Disparities in Cancer?

CDC provides funding and technical assistance to help states, tribes/tribal organizations, and territories collect data on cancer incidence and death, cancer risk factors, and the use of cancer screening tests. Public health professionals use the data to identify and track cancer trends, strengthen cancer prevention and control activities, and prioritize the use of resources.

White MC, Espey DK, Swan J, Wiggins CL, Ehemann C, Kaur JS. [Disparities in cancer mortality and incidence among American Indians and Alaska Natives in the United States](#). *American Journal of Public Health* 2014;104 Suppl 3:S377-S387.

CAUSES OF DEATH AMONG AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKA NATIVES

CDC's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control sponsored a supplemental issue of the *American Journal of Public Health* about the leading causes of death among American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) populations.

Death records and cancer incidence records were linked with Indian Health Service registration data to identify AI/AN people correctly, as they are often incorrectly reported as being members of other racial groups. Previous studies show that nearly 30% of people who identify themselves as AI/AN when living are classified as another race at the time of death.



Death records and cancer incidence records were linked with Indian Health Service registration data to identify AI/AN people correctly, as they are often incorrectly reported as being members of other racial groups. (CDC, 2014)